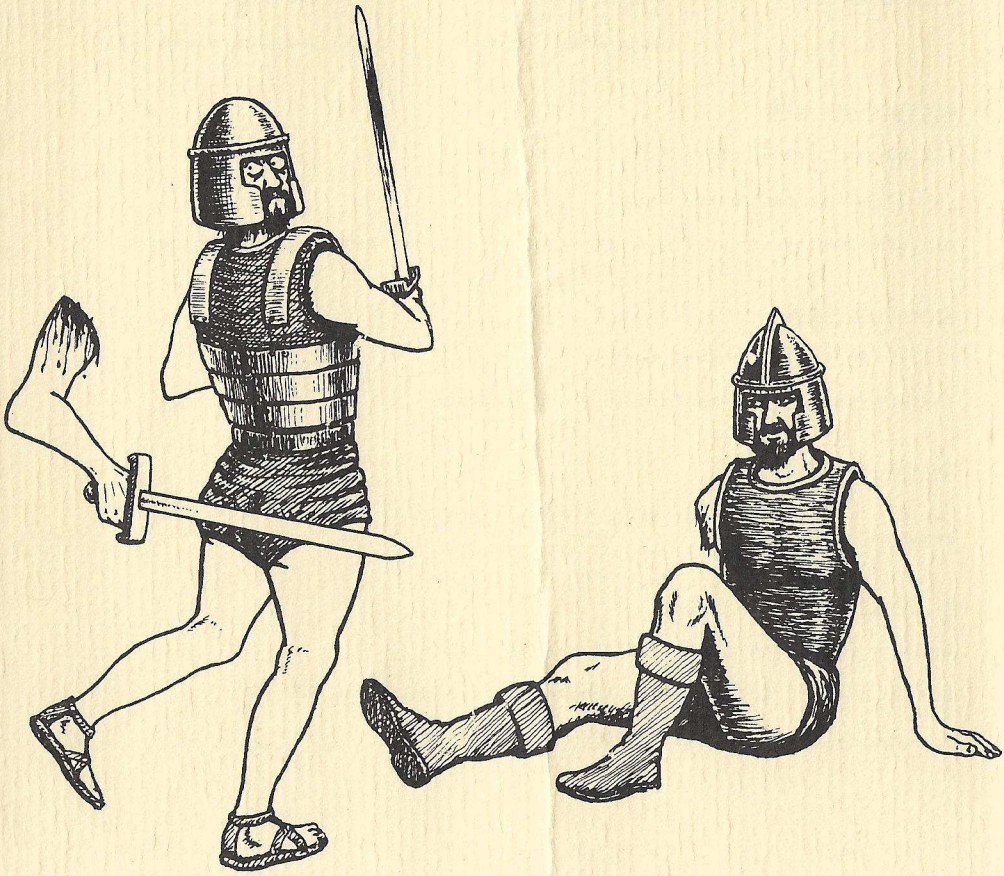
NOVACON

17 - 19 November 1989

Excelsior Hotel. Birmingham

Progress Report 3



NOVACON 19 - Important Information

Dates

17th - 19th November 1989

Venue

The Excelsior Hotel, Coventry Road, Birmingham, B26 3QW

Overflow Hotels

The Wheatsheaf Hotel, 2225 Coventry Road, Sheldon, Birmingham, B26 3EH

Hotel Room Rates

Excelsior Hotel	Single Room:	£25 per night
	Twin/Double Room:	£20 per person per night
Wheatsheaf Hotel	Single Room:	£30 per night
	Twin/Double Room:	£20 per person per night

Membership Rates

£12.00 per person before 30th October 1989

£15.00 per person on the door

Day memberships are available on request - contact Bernie Evans for details

Book Room Rates

£15.00 per table for the weekend

Dealers must also be members of the convention

Creche Rates

Limited creche facilities will be free of charge to children of convention members

All Purpose Contact Address

For all convention enquiries please contact:

Bernie Evans, 7 Grove Avenue, Acocks Green, Birmingham, B27 7UY

Telephone (evenings): 021-707 6606

Hello! Anybody out there?

I feel I can be forgiven for thinking that the answer to that question is a resounding "NO!". Here we are, two months away from the convention, and more than half of you people out there haven't booked your rooms yet! Bernie Evans, our beleaguered Reservations person, may have many qualities - but telepathy isn't one of them. If you wish to have somewhere to rest your weary head at this convention I'm afraid it IS necessary to COMPLETE the HOTEL BOOKING FORM enclosed with this PR, attach your ROOM DEPOSIT in the form of a CHEQUE for £25.00 made payable to "TRUST HOUSE FORTE (UK) LTD" and send them to BERNIE EVANS at 7 GROVE AVENUE, ACOCKS GREEN, BIRMINGHAM, B27 7UY. If you want to be in the EXCELSIOR, our CONVENTION HOTEL, rather than the WHEATSHEAF, our OVERFLOW HOTEL, you'd better do this IMMEDIATELY!

Unfortunately, as predicted in the previous two PRs, there are no single rooms left in the Excelsior, so if you want to stay in the main hotel I'm afraid it will have to be in a twin or double room. However, the overflow hotel is only a five minute drive away at Sheldon (see map on centre pages) or a 25 minute walk away. But please note that single rooms at the overflow hotel will cost £30 per night - which is £5.00 per night more than at the Excelsior. If demand justifies it, we may organise a minibus service to the Wheatsheaf, but on present figures this looks unlikely.

If you are in doubt about whether or not you have booked a room, contact Bernie on 021-707 6606 during the evening. If you booked early (i.e. by 30th June as requested) you will already have received your confirmation from the hotel. If you didn't, the second batch of confirmations will be sent out by Bernie Evans late October/early November.

Martin Tudor

EASTER CON '90 — April 13th-16th 1990

Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool

North by Northwest

Eastcon, the 1990 British National Science Fiction Convention has moved to the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool. The Adelphi was the venue of the successful 1988 British National SF Convention, Follycon.

The Eastcon committee chose the Adelphi after difficulties with the Clarendon Suite forced a change from the original site. After consideration no available Birmingham site was judged to be satisfactory.

Guests are: Iain M. Banks, Nigel Kneale, Ken Campbell, artist SMS and fan Anne Page.

Room rates remain: Single £25 per night, Double/Twin/Triple £22.50 per person per night. Book 4 nights together and get £10 off the total (i.e. single £90 for 4 nights, double/twin/triple £80 for 4 nights).

Membership rates remain at £20 attending, £9 supporting until the 1st December 1989. Conversion is at the current difference in rates. Pre-supports get £1 off the above rates. More information will be going out to members shortly. If you are a member, and have not received PRs 1 or 2, please write and let us know.

The committee is still recruiting staff for the convention. If you want to know more about Eastcon, think you could help out, or simply haven't joined yet, please get in touch with us through our new contact address below.

EastCon '90, 15 Maldon Close, Camberwell, London, SE5 8DD.

The Programme

Here we are then, the bit you've all been waiting for. What delights will we, the NOVACON Committee, stage to entertain you as you sup your chosen beverage? Actually, we don't think this is quite the attitude. We want your participation to spark off discussion. All the panels have been arranged with audience participation in mind: this means you.

Nearly all the programme items fall into the three elements of the overall theme of the convention, 'The Music, the Science and the Fiction of the Sixties', as do the chosen films. The centrepiece of the programme is to be an original dramatic presentation written by our Guest of Honour, GEOFF RYMAN. This is based upon the Sumerian legend, the Epic of Gilgamesh. Geoff himself will be performing the piece, aided by an Indian dancer and traditional music.

On the music side, we will also be featuring PAM'S SIXTIES POP QUIZ, with questions by fandom's encyclopaedia of music, JIMMY ROBERTSON. This will be chaired by NOVACON's own PAM WELLS, and will pit BERNIE EVANS AND THE NOVACON COMMITTEE against MICK EVANS AND THE REST OF THE CON.

For the film programme, after discussion we have chosen to show items on large screen video rather than the traditional 16mm film, as this gave us a far wider selection of material to choose from. We kick off on Friday afternoon with something to get you in the spirit of the convention: 'WOODSTOCK', and nobody can tell me that isn't a science fiction or fantasy film! On a more serious side, we plan to be showing the Oscar winning film 'CHARLY', which was taken from Daniel Keyes' Nebula winning novel 'FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON', which in turn came from the Hugo winning short story of the same name. We will also be running 'NIC FAREY'S ALL NIGHT VIDEO PROGRAMME', showing a variety of episodes from 60s TV series and related material. Plus a couple of surprises we're still working on....

The 60s was an era of massive development in all areas, especially rocketry, and we have PAT COLLINS talking about just that. JACK COHEN will explore the 'softer' areas of biology and genetic science for us. Not ignoring the cultural aspect of the decade, LUCY IN THE SKY WITH DICK will be a panel chaired by GREG PICKERSGILL, with CHRIS STOCKS and DAVE PACKWOOD, amongst others, taking part in a discussion about the relationship and influence of writers such as Dick on the emergence of the so-called 'permissive society'. Was there any relationship, and if so, who influenced who? Come along and give us your views....

Did the social revolution touch fandom, then? We talk to fans including BOB SHAW and JAMES WHITE, who were around and active at the time, to find out what really happened.... And what about the effect of the 60s on those people writing today? In BORN IN THE SIXTIES, BRED IN THE SIXTIES, BIG IN THE SIXTIES we'll be talking to STORM CONSTANTINE, IAIN BANKS and one other writer about their perceptions of the 60s and what influence, if any, the decade had on them.

So why not stop and give your ideas, but remember it was the era of peace and love, etc., so let's keep the debates friendly....

Helena Bowles

My Friend Geoff Ryman
by KIM Campbell

What can I tell you about Geoff? He works very hard, but has this very cunning talent for making it look like great fun. I can remember one night at the Tun (old)...Geoff came up to me and said, "How would you like to be in a play that I am writing, Kim?"

Like a fool I said, "Sure, Geoff, I really enjoy acting."

I gave this little thought, thinking that it was the usual 'Tun Talk' and that nothing further would come from it. About six months later my postman is banging on the door demanding compensation for delivering this hernia-causing package. This turned out to be the first manuscript for 'The Transmigration of Timothy Archer'.

'Oh well,' I thought, 'Just because he's been and gone and writ it doesn't mean that we will ever be asked to perform it.' I was wrong.

Geoff must love to work hard. Otherwise why would he keep doing things the hard way? He not only wrote the script, got the relevant permissions from the copyright holders, directed the play, cast it, arranged a place for us to present it, found rehearsal space in the towns we played in, and saw to a million and one things to make everything easier for the cast, but he took a large part in the play himself. If that's not workaholic I don't know what is! The really amazing thing is that it was all so much fun.

Fun is the word that tends to sum up time spent in Geoff's company. His curiosity about just about everything is infectious, and you can find yourself thinking differently about most things. For example, how would you react to the idea about getting up at the crack of dawn to catch a coach to go out to the country, in the middle of the worst winter this country has had in living memory? I didn't think much of it at first either. But then that old Ryman magic got to work and I was positively looking forward to these self-punishment exercises. It was either his enthusiasm or his fresh baked bread, I'm not too sure which.

Geoff is also a very caring person. During the above mentioned winter during which we were rehearsing at Geoff's "Country Manor", there was one particularly bad snowfall on the Friday night and because I was not on the 'phone Geoff came all the way out to my place in east London (before the crack of dawn) just to make sure that I wasn't trying to get out to Oxford. This astounded me because I had already been out once that morning and had judged the roads to be impassable. (Maybe he is descended from a US Mailman ...neither sleet nor snow, etc.)

I know lots of anecdotes involving Geoff, there's the one about looking for a bar in Newcastle...lots of dressing room tales, but no one would ever tell those if they wished to live. The best way to get to know Geoff is to talk to him. He's really very nice, and I've not known him to drink to excess (for this alone he must be unique among writers!), just because he is an averagely tall Canadian who puts 110% of effort into things (so he only has to do it once), he is the nicest person I know.

Just remember, his bed time is 10 o'clock, and if he's not in bed by then, he's going home.

KIM Campbell

NOVACON 19: How to Get There

By Rail

Get off at Birmingham International Station (NOT New Street). Get a taxi to the hotel. OR catch the 900 bus to Birmingham from outside the station and ask for the Excelsior hotel. OR, if you're feeling energetic, turn left out of the station, walk up to the A45 island, turn right and keep going for about a mile. The hotel is on the right at the entrance to the Freeport.

By Car

From the M6, leave at Junction 4 and head south on the M42. Leave at Junction 3 and take the A45 towards the NEC and station, and carry on a short distance until you get to a set of traffic lights. You will see the Excelsior (Airport Hotel) on your right. Turn right at the lights (signposted to Freeport and Hotel) and you're there.

Parking

The hotel has free parking space for approximately 200 cars, or if you prefer to pay, there is a large NCP just past the hotel on the way to the Freeport.

By Bus from Birmingham

Catch the 900 to Coventry from Stephenson Street behind the Midland Hotel. This stops close to the Excelsior and runs every 20 minutes during the day and every 30 minutes in the evening and on Sunday.

By Coach

National coaches will go to Digbeth coach station, which is on the Coventry Road. Go out of the station, cross the road and look for the bus stop for the 900 going to Coventry. Get off by the Excelsior hotel.

By Air

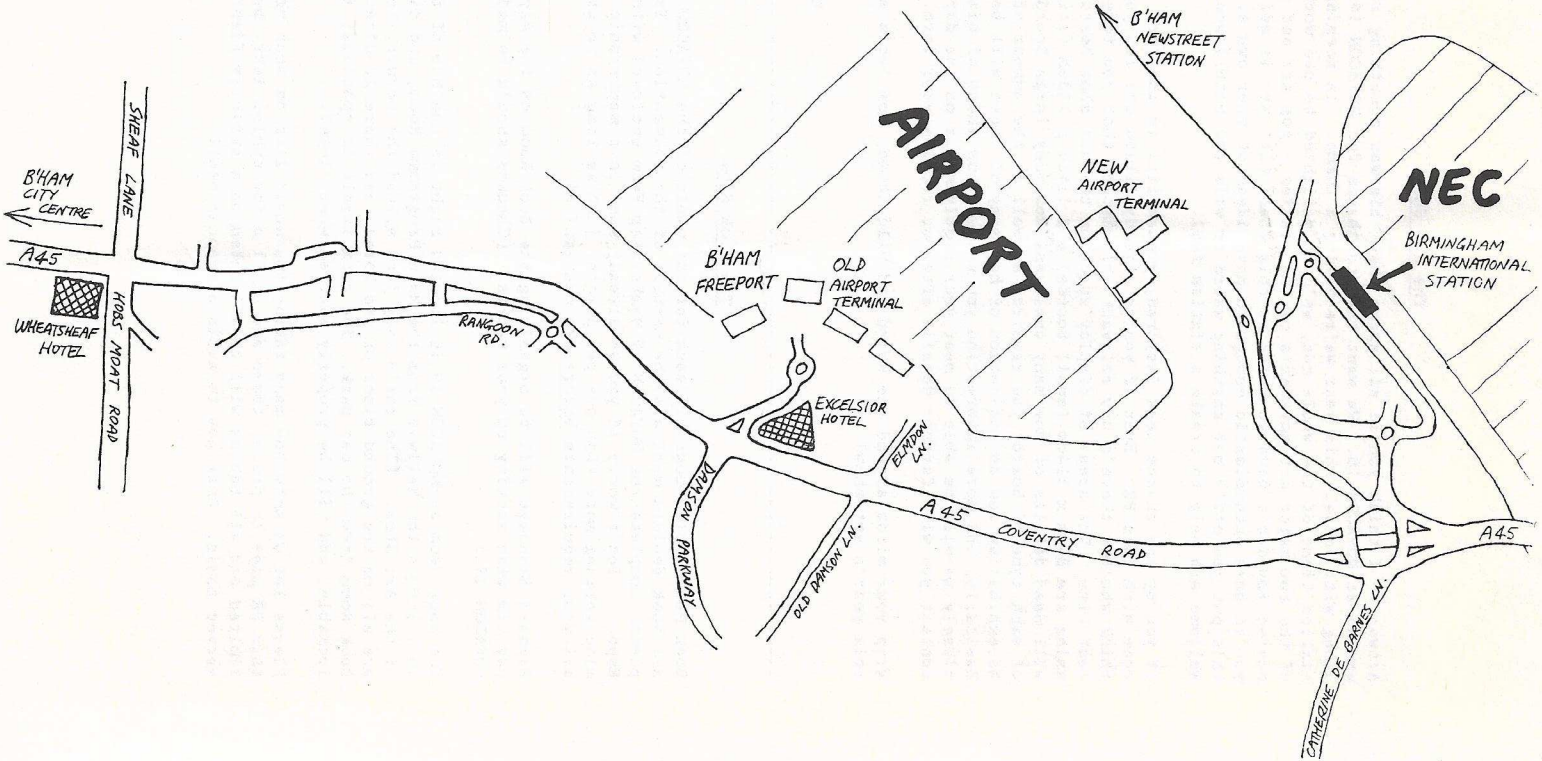
Really easy. Get a plane which goes to Birmingham. Get off the plane and into a taxi and ask for the Excelsior. Then buy the committee a drink, because we don't earn as much as you.

Getting to the Wheatsheaf Hotel

This is the overflow hotel, and is situated on the A45. Go past the Excelsior and carry on for about one mile towards Birmingham city centre. You will come to a crossroads with overhead traffic lights, and the hotel is on the left opposite corner (Hobs Moat Road). The 900 bus also stops by the hotel in both directions.

Tony Berry

nNiOnVeAtCeOeNn



The Art Show

Artwork - I think you'll all agree that this was something rather thin on the ground at NOVACON 18. We want that to change for NOVACON 19, so to help you along with ideas, this year we're having a theme. In keeping with the sixties theme of the whole con, we'd be delighted to see work along the lines of the two major art movements of the sixties - pop art and surrealism. Of course you don't have to stick to this theme (all art is welcome, and if you've been enthusiastic enough to have ideas of your own already, don't let this put you off!) but anything weird or wild (or both!) would be especially welcome and help to create a sixties feel.

If you by any chance feel inspired, please fill in the form that should have come with this PR. Even if you've already filled one in, you might like to think whether there's any relevant information that you forgot to put down last time. The areas of display space on the art show boards we will be using are 84cm x 114cm (small boards) and 114cm x 113cm (large boards). We will need details of how many small and how many large boards (or proportions of each type of board) you require, as well as the number of pieces you will be exhibiting and an indication of how many of these will be for sale. Basically, the more information you can give us ahead of time, the more closely we will be able to meet your requirements on the day. We will contact you with further details after we receive your form.

Wrap your minds around the Weird and Wild theme, and let's see some energy in this year's art show!

Elinor Predota

The Book Room

Book Room tables cost £15 each for the whole of the NOVACON 19 weekend, and all book dealers must also be members of the convention. To reserve tables, please complete the NOVACON 19 Membership Form enclosed with this Progress Report. Don't worry if you've already sent in a membership form; we don't mind getting more than one per person, just as long as we are made aware of all your requirements <u>before</u> the convention!

Richard Standage will be organising the Book Room on the day, and you should pay him when setting up your tables. (Cheques should be made payable to NOVACON 19.)

The Book Room at NOVACON 19 is located right in the hub of the convention - just across the hallway from the Main Programme Room, and directly in front of the Art Show. (The bar's only just around the corner, too!) These rooms are all on the ground floor of the hotel, and there is direct access to the Book Room from the car park. The room itself is spacious; it is also fully lockable, and will be properly secured when closed.

Please let us know how many tables you would like as soon as possible. As this PR goes to press, there are still a few tables left, but space is limited and all tables will be allocated on a strictly first come - first served basis. Book now to avoid disappointment!

The Nova Awards

Enclosed with this Progress Report you will find a Nova Awards Voting Form. Just in case anyone thinks there hasn't been much around, fanzine-wise, over the last year, here is a list of fanzines I know to be eligible.

And All That Jazz - Dave Wood
Arrows of Desire - S V O'Jay
Balloons Over Bristol - Christina Lake & Peter-Fred Thompson
Black Hole - Ian Creasey (Leeds University)
Blatant - Avedon Carol
Bogus - Harry Bond
The Caprician - Christina Lake & Lilian Edwards
Cathay Contrivance - Peter Smith
Chicken Bones - Abigail Frost
A Child's Garden of Olaf - Ken Cheslin
Civilisation Reviewed - Mike Gould
Conrunner - Ian Sorensen
The Co-Operative Cauliflower - Harry Bond
Coruscant Spud - Nigel E Richardson
Crystal Ship - John D Owen
Dial 174 - Terry Moran Jr
Domble in the Works - Lesley Ward
Dreamberry Wine - Mike Don
Efilnikufesin - Kev McVeigh
Empties - Martin Tudor
Erg - Terry Jeeves
Eta - Rob Hansen
Eyeballs in the Sky - Tony Berry
Fanzine Fanatique - Keith Walker
A Free Lunch - Mike Christie & Sherry Coldsmith
Free Radical - Steve Green
Fuck the Tories - Judith Hanna & Joseph Nicholas
Gross Encounters - Alan Dorey
Hallo There - Sandy Brown
The Hard Core - Jael Nuit
Highway 61 Resurfaced - Kev McVeigh
The Intermediate Reptile - Abigail Frost, Steve Linton, Caroline Mullan & Bernie Peek
Kamera Obskura - Owen Whiteoak
The Last Ripples - John D Owen
Lip - Hazel Ashworth
Marital Rats of Shaolin - Geogre Bondar
Maverick - Jenny Glover
Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure - Abigail Frost
No Problem - Terry Moran Jr
Now Eat The Rabbit - William Whyte
Nutz - Pam Wells
Pulp - Vince Clarke, Avedon Carol/ Rob Hansen & John Harvey
Qotha (various) - Geogre Bondar
Real Soon Now - David Bell
Sglodion - Dave Langford
Screwed Up Letters - Alan J Sullivan
Shipyard Blues - John D Owen
Small Mammal - Martin Easterbrook & Margaret Austin
Space Doubt - Joe McNally
The Stale Tinned Milk of Human Kindness - Owen Whiteoak
Suppose They Held a Convention and Nobody Came - Keith Walker
Strange Perversions and Literary Lunches - Ivan Towlson
Terry Broome's Underwear - Geogre Bondar
Then - Rob Hansen
Time Crusaders - Keith Walker
Too Old to Rock and Roll - Stewart Jackson
The Truth Behind the Bloodstains - Kev McVeigh
The Truth Behind the Chili Stains - Kev McVeigh
Vile Anchors (various) - Simon Polley
VSOP - Jan Orys
Worlds Apart - Bridget Wilkinson

This list is incomplete, as neither I nor the people whose files I've culled receive every published title. I don't have space here to provide a list of eligible writers and artists, but again there's a wide field to choose from. Full voting details are outlined on the form itself, and I urge as many of you as possible to use your votes; after all, the broader the electorate, the more representative the result. Last year we received a record-equalling 55 votes - let's beat that record this time! Return your voting forms to me at the address below, or place them in the box provided at NOVACON on Saturday.

Pam Wells, Nova Awards Administrator
24A Beech Road, Bowes Park, London, N11 2DA

The NOVACON Quiz
by Vernon Brown

Several years ago the then editor of the Programme Book asked me to provide him with an article or puzzle or something to help fill it out. In the event he got the "or something", because:

a) I had a lot of questions available from a quiz that I used to do for the BSFG.

b) For some time I had been intending to design a multiple choice answer sheet for my job.

c) The first GCSE examinations were to be held in the near future.

Putting all these together produced the first NOVACON General Certificate in Science-fiction Education, a multiple choice quiz that could be marked on the Saturday evening, thus permitting entrants to collect their GCSE pass certificates during the following day. As an extra incentive, entrants were also entered into a free draw for a number of prizes.

Requests over the following years have kept the Quiz going, and it could well become a NOVACON tradition; although this, of course, will depend on the annual response, as it is an active rather than a passive event.

Over the years the format has changed slightly - nowadays entrants can choose the questions/answers they submit and there is a "set book", but the basic layout remains the same: a number of questions each given with several answers, the correct one of which you have to select, a Certificate for all who pass, and a Prize Draw. The "set book" is a known book on which a number of questions will be set - this year it is 'LORD KALVAN OF OTHERWHEN', AKA 'GUNPOWDER GOD' by H Beam Piper, an excellent alternative world novel.

Full details will be given in the Programme Book - please check these when you receive it, as completed answer papers must be handed in by late Saturday afternoon.

So read the set book, bring a black or blue pen, biro or writing felt-tip to the con, and fill in those odd moments by filling in the answer sheet.

Vernon Brown

Just a brief reminder that in an attempt to recapture the spirit of halcyon days (i.e. the thrills and excitement of the pool and darts tournaments at NOVACONs 15 and 16) whilst making good use of the two full-sized snooker tables we have access to at the Excelsior, Stephen Tudor will be running a Snooker Tournament at NOVACON 19. To enter the tournament, all you have to do is complete the entry form enclosed with this PR and return it to:

Stephen Tudor, c/o 121 Cape Hill, Smethwick, Warley, West Midlands, B66 4SH

In addition, you will be required to pay £1.00 to Stephen at the convention before starting your opening game. So, what are you waiting for? Enter already!

Martin Tudor

The Members

188 John Brunner
189 Melinda Young
190 Alison Cook
191 Tim Goodier
192 Mike Ford
193 Cherry Newton
194 Henry Newton
195 Laura Wheatley
196 Moira Shearman
197 Ben Brown
198 Rod Milner
199 Malcolm Cohen
200 Liam R Quin
201 Catherine McAulay
202 Roger Culpan
203 John English
204 William Armitage
205 KIM Campbell
206 Colin Harris
207 Jim Barker
208 Linda Robson
209 Christina Lake
210 Martin Smith
211 Alan Dorey
212 Rochelle Dorey
213 Mark Reynolds
214 Kay Hancox
215 Jack Cohen
216 Kathy Gale
217 Kay Allan
218 Sheree E Brookes
219 Jan Orys
220 Tom Wiltshire
221 Ina Shorrock
222 John Fairey
223 Helen Goff
224 Simon D Ings
225 Richard Standage
226 Bob Shaw
227 Sarah Shaw
228 D West
229 Dave Wood
230 Neil Tomkinson
231 Alison Mitchell
232 Ray Bradbury
233 Mike Llewellyn
234 Rachel Anne Baker
235 Mark Plummer
236 Ian Brooks
237 Kate Solomon
238 Malcolm Davies
239 Bill Longley
240 Jason Grant
241 Paul Brazier
242 Juliet Eyeions
243 Kevin Thacker
244 M W Green
245 Terry Pratchett
246 Graham Taylor
247 Lisanne Norman
248 Stu Andrews
249 Lee Montgomerie
250 Helen McNabb
251 Mike McNabb
252 Geoff Cowie
253 Kevin Joyce
254 Storm Constantine
255 Jayle Summers
256 Rob Hansen
257 Avedon Carol
258 Boyd Parkinson
259 Pat Brown
260 Charles Stross
261 Paul McCaulay
262 Penny Heal
263 Paul McAuley
264 Duncan Booth
265 Judy Booth
266 Claire Brialey
267 Noel Collyer
268 Jane Johnson
269 M John Harrison
270 Mike Kaill
271 Desiree Van Zijl

Bits and Pieces:
Hello! Anybody Out There? and snooker information by Martin Tudor
The Programme by Helena Bowles
The Art Show by Elinor Predota
My Friend Geoff Ryman by KIM Campbell
NOVACON 19: How to Get There by Tony Berry
The NOVACON Quiz by Vernon Brown
Front Cover Illustration by D West
Back Cover Illustration by Dave Mooring
Logos by Jim Barker
Everything else by Pam Wells, including typing, layout and assembly
Produced on a QMS-Kiss Laser Printer using an IBM PC and WordVision software
Copyright the BSFG 1989, reverting to authors on publication
Printed by Designaprint Ltd, Bloxwich

nNiOnVeAtCeOeNn

featuring

Guest of Honour

GEOFF RYMAN

and

a dramatic presentation of

GILGAMESH